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# News Release

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## **Warmer conditions allow Bert Fire to grow while meeting objectives**

**Williams, Ariz., June 1, 2016—For Immediate Release.** With warmer and drier conditions, the Bert Fire on the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest has increased to 130 acres in size and is expected to grow larger over the next several days. Fire officials have identified a planning area within which to allow the fire to move safely to the south and west of Ebert Mountain near the point of origin in order to reduce hazardous fuels and improve grassland conditions.

Today, crews will continue preparation work which will include securing roadways, archaeological sites, range fences, power lines and any other potentially fire-sensitive resources within the established boundaries for the fire. Some techniques used will involve removing burnable materials away from these features as well as conducting burn out operations along roadways to stop fire as it approaches. Among several objectives identified, managers have recognized a predefined planning area for grassland restoration within the fire area.

“This is a unique opportunity for us to enhance this grassland restoration project area using fire as an effective tool,” said Deirdre McLaughlin, lands and minerals staff officer for the Williams Ranger District.

Smoke from the Bert Fire may become prominent as it increases in activity and continues to grow, and will be visible from the surrounding communities and highways. Winds are expected to be northwest moving smoke away from developed residential neighborhoods and be pushed toward the southeast with good ventilation. The public is urged to use caution while driving along Highway 64 and Highway 180 during the cooler early morning hours when smoke may be lower due to inversion. No closures are currently anticipated in the area of the fire.

Additional fire information for the Kaibab National Forest can be obtained through the following sources: InciWeb <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4751/>; Kaibab National Forest Fire Information Phone Line (928) 635-8311; Text Message – text ‘follow kaibabnf’ to 40404.

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